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For Immediate Release

Judicial Nominating Commission releases names of nominees to fill vacant Circuit Court judgeship for Lincoln, Pulaski and Rockcastle counties

FRANKFORT, Ky., June 30, 2005 — The Judicial Nominating Commission, led by Chief Justice Joseph E. Lambert, met yesterday at the Pulaski County Courthouse in Somerset to choose nominees to replace the late Robert E. Gillum. Circuit Judge Gillum served the 28th Judicial Circuit, consisting of Lincoln, Pulaski and Rockcastle counties, until his untimely death in April. Three individuals were nominated to fill this vacancy: Attorney William David "Bill" Gregory, Attorney Paul Francis Henderson III and District Judge David Austin Tapp.

Attorney William David "Bill" Gregory

Gregory earned a law degree from the University of Tennessee and a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Kentucky. He resides and works in Mount Vernon where his law practice covers a wide range of civil actions and criminal matters. The nature of his practice has been varied, ranging from the former county court trial system to appellate matters both in Kentucky and in the federal 6th Circuit Court of Appeals. Gregory previously served as county attorney for Rockcastle County and master commissioner for Rockcastle Circuit Court. He is also a veteran of the U.S. Army.

Attorney Paul Francis Henderson III

Henderson resides and practices law in Somerset. He handles both civil and criminal law, with the majority of his cases in bankruptcy, domestic relations, personal injury and workers' compensation. He graduated from the University of Kentucky College of Law after completing a bachelor's degree in math and chemistry from Centre College in Danville.

District Judge David Austin Tapp

Judge Tapp currently serves as a district judge for Pulaski and Rockcastle counties. He previously served as a felony prosecutor in a three-county area, practiced federal and state criminal litigation at the trial and appellate levels, and was an assistant commonwealth's attorney for the 28th Judicial Circuit. Judge Tapp earned a law degree from the University of Louisville School of Law, a master's degree in criminal justice administration from the Chaminade University of Hawaii and a bachelor's degree from Morehead State University. He resides in Somerset.

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Judicial Nominating Process

When a judicial vacancy occurs, the executive secretary of the Judicial Nominating Commission publishes a notice of vacancy in the judicial circuit or the judicial district affected. Attorneys can recommend someone or nominate themselves. The names of the applicants are not released. Once nominations occur, the individuals interested in the position return a questionnaire to the Office of Chief Justice. Chief Justice Lambert then meets with the Judicial Nominating Commission to choose three nominees. Because the Kentucky Constitution requires that three names be submitted to the governor, in some cases the commission submits an attorney's name even though the attorney did not apply. A letter naming the three nominees is sent to Gov. Ernie Fletcher for review. When the governor appoints a replacement, his office makes the announcement.

Circuit Court

Circuit Court is the court of general jurisdiction and hears all criminal matters involving more than \$4,000. It has jurisdiction over capital offenses and felonies, dissolution of marriage, adoption, termination of parent rights, land disputes and contested probate cases. Kentucky judges, justices and circuit court clerks are supported by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), which is the administrative arm of the Kentucky Court of Justice. The AOC provides ongoing training and education to the state's judges.

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